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THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL.

The gospel is the scheme of grace, which God has revealed in the holy scriptures for the salvation of sinners, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first notice of the gospel was given to the parents of the human family on their apostacy from their primitive holiness. It was more clearly revealed to Abraham, to Moses and the prophets, until the Lord Jesus Christ appeared on the earth. During his ministry he plainly preached and correctly explained the gospel of the grace of God. He said, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." To the saints at Corinth the apostle says, "Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and in which ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received,

how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." It is, then, evident, that the gospel is the great scheme of salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is this gospel, which is called the everlasting gospel in the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation. There John says, "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him, that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters."

That the gospel of salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ is, with propriety, called the everlasting gospel, may appear from the following observations.

1. This gospel was devised from eternity. The scheme of redemption arose from the good pleasure of God. He was not bound, in justice, to do any thing for the sal-

vation of sinners. It was wholly from his infinite benevolence, that he formed the purpose of their salvation. But when did he form this purpose? This question has been variously answered by such persons, as have attempted to explain the gospel. Many have supposed, that the plan of salvation was not an original design of God, but was adopted upon the apostacy of mankind. They imagine, that God intended, when he formed our first parents, that they and their posterity should always be perfectly holy and happy. And they suppose, that after God saw sin had entered the world, he formed the scheme of salvation, that he might overrule the existence of evil to his own glory and the good of his intelligent creatures. But this supposition is highly derogatory to the infinite wisdom of the creator and governor of the universe. For it implies a great defect, either in his natural or moral attributes, to form a scheme, which needed such an important and essential alteration and amendment. It is, therefore, more rational to suppose that the scheme of redemption was his original and eternal purpose. And if we examine the scriptures we shall find the most explicit and positive declarations, that God formed the plan of the gospel before the existence of any other being. To the saints at Ephesus the apostle writes—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spir-  
itual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And again in the same epistle, "Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Here the scheme of redemption is declared to be the eternal purpose of God and his ultimate design in the work of creation. It appears, therefore, from the divine character and declarations, that the gospel, in its origin, is from eternity. The plan was formed and fixed eternal ages before the work of creation was begun. It is the first and supreme design of God, which includes all his other designs and all the means of their accomplishment. The scheme of redemption is so far from being only an appendage to the scheme of creation, that the design of creation is wholly subservient to the supreme and ultimate design of redemption.

2. The gospel is everlasting in its nature. The scheme of salvation through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was not only formed



in eternity, but it was formed upon immutable principles and upon an eternal foundation. It resulted from the united perfections of the Deity. His whole mind was employed in forming this great design. He clearly perceived whatever was possible, and in view of what infinite wisdom, infinite goodness and almighty power could do, he saw the plan of the gospel to be the best scheme, that he could devise and effect. When God formed this plan he had a perfect knowledge of all things, that ever can be known by his rational creatures, or even by himself. It is not, therefore, possible that any imperfection should ever be discovered, or any amendment ever be devised, in respect to the purpose of redemption. For this reason the gospel must be immutable and everlasting in its nature. If the design of God in the gospel were defective or imperfect, it might be revised and amended and consequently might not be eternal. But since it was formed in the council of infinite knowledge, wisdom and goodness, it is the best of all schemes, that were possible and is established upon an immutable foundation. It cannot be amended in a single iota by the united wisdom of all rational creatures, that ever can exist; nor by the manifold wisdom of the only wise God. This perfect and glorious scheme can never be, in the least degree, varied through the ages of eternity. God, therefore, will forever work all things

after the counsel of his own will according to the everlasting gospel of his grace. Hence the psalmist says, "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever;—the thoughts of his heart to all generations." And God says by Isaiah, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." As the gospel is founded upon the immutable perfections of God, it is, in its nature, as eternal as his existence, and as immutable as his perfections. It is, therefore, everlasting in its nature as well as in its origin.

3. The gospel is everlasting in its effects. It forever interested and gratified the affections of Jehovah. It was the great subject of his contemplation and felicity. He clearly perceived its great and happy effects, which, in prospect, afforded him perfect and infinite satisfaction. But it could not have any influence except upon his own mind, until he began to create other beings. The work of creation was the first effect of the purpose of redemption through Jesus Christ. As it is written, "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: and he is before all things and by him all things consist." From these words it is evident, that all things were created in reference to the purpose of redemption, which the Lord

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Jesus Christ engaged to perform. As this purpose began to operate in the creation of all things, so it has continued to operate in their preservation and government. It has operated upon the material system and also upon the lower species of living creatures. The whole creation groaneth under the evils and pains, which are connected with the purpose of God in the salvation of sinners.— These effects are temporary.— The world will be burnt and the brutes will cease to exist. The scheme of the gospel has also operated upon rational creatures, and its effects upon such creatures will be eternal.

It involved the rebellion of the apostate angels in heaven and established the elect angels in everlasting holiness and happiness.— The scheme of the gospel has occasioned the universal rebellion of mankind. For the purpose of God in the redemption of sinners could not have been effected, unless Adam had fallen from his original rectitude and his posterity had become sinners. The state of the world from the fall of Adam unto this day has been affected by the influence of the gospel upon the character and condition of human beings. The gospel brought the Lord Jesus Christ into the world, nailed him to the cross, raised him from the grave to heaven and placed him as head over all things unto the church. The gospel opened the way for the effusions of the Holy Spirit. And ac-

ording to the gospel God forms vessels of mercy and vessels of wrath and fits every human being for his future and eternal condition. Nor will there ever be in the universe a rational creature, whose character will not be formed by the influence of the gospel. And the characters of rational creatures, as they will be formed through the influence of the gospel, will continue forever; and their condition will agree with their character and be equally permanent. They, who are in their moral character formed into the image of God, will enjoy his favor forever; but they who are not formed into his moral image, will fall under his everlasting displeasure. It is one of the plainest doctrines of the gospel, that the happiness of the righteous will continue forever and that the misery of the wicked will never end. In his description of the final judgment the supreme Judge has said, "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." According to the Savior's representation of the final judgment, the gospel operated from the foundation of the world and by its influence formed the



character of the righteous and the character of the wicked and produced the glorious and awful effects of everlasting life and everlasting death. But after the decisions of the final judgment the influence & effects of the gospel will continue through the endless ages of eternity. As long as God shall preserve and govern the moral world he will work all things according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus. The scheme of the gospel always has been and always will be the measure of the divine conduct. Though this scheme will be brought to a consummation at the judgment of the great day; yet it will not then be so finished, that there will be no occasion for God to govern his intelligent creatures, wherever they may be placed; whether in a state of perfect blessedness or of endless perdition. And his government of his rational creatures in eternity will continue and extend the influence and effects of his great purpose of redemption. The gospel, therefore, will be literally and absolutely everlasting in its effects; which will be seen and felt, with increasing attention and sensibility, by every rational being forever and ever. The origin, the nature and the effects of the great purpose of redemption, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, illustrate and establish the sentiment, that the gospel is, with the highest propriety, called the everlasting gospel. This sentiment, which has been illustrated

and established by the preceding observations, suggests a number of remarks, which deserve a candid and serious attention.

1. If the gospel be the eternal system of divine conduct, then, according to the gospel, God is, in all things, his own supreme object. God could not devise, establish and accomplish the purpose of redemption through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, without a supreme object, which should be worthy of himself. But could God, in the past ages of eternity, have found any object, that should be worthy of his supreme affection, except himself; when there was no other being in existence? Or, in the future ages of eternity, can God find any being, except himself, that shall be worthy of his supreme affection; when there can be no other being, to whom he shall not give existence? And when all other beings, that ever shall exist, are before the mind of God, can they, in his view, be more worthy of his supreme affection than himself? Though God should create worlds upon worlds without cessation and without limitation forever; yet he could not cause such a system of created existence, as should possess more knowledge, wisdom, power, goodness and happiness than do forever exist in himself. Whatever might be the multitude and magnitude of the creatures, that God could create, yet these created beings cannot be more worthy of their own supreme affection, or of his su-

preme affection than their creator. The creator must, in the nature of things, possess knowledge and wisdom, power and goodness, beauty and happiness incomparably superior to what he can communicate to created beings, whatever might be their multitude or their magnitude. No created being can be eternal, or self-existent, or omnipotent. No created being can be holy as God is holy, or just as God is just, or good as God is good, or gracious as God is gracious, or true as God is true. Though created beings may be like God in the nature of his rational powers and in the nature of his moral perfections; yet they cannot be like him in the duration and extent of his natural and moral perfections. God must forever be the only supreme, eternal, independent and self-existent being; and the only being, who can ever possess infinite perfection. He must, therefore, be unto himself and to all other beings the only worthy object of supreme attention, affection and enjoyment.— And before God, created beings must forever be as nothing. According to the plainest and strongest dictates of reason, God must be, because he ought to be, the only worthy object of his supreme affection in all his designs, and in all his conduct. If the gospel be a rational system, it must agree with the perfections of Jehovah. And if it agrees with his perfections, he must be his own supreme object in the eternal purpose of

redemption, which he purposed in Christ Jesus, and which he performs through the blood of the everlasting covenant, by the power and grace of the Holy Spirit.

2. If the gospel be the eternal system of divine conduct, then God has, according to the gospel, decreed all things. The scheme of the gospel includes the existence, the powers, the actions and state of the holy and unholy angels. It includes the existence, the properties, and operations of the material system. It includes the existence, the character, the conduct and state of the common parents of the human family, and of their innumerable descendants. The scheme of the gospel includes the mediation, the incarnation, the crucifixion and exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ; his appearance at the final judgment, his resignation of his mediatorial authority, the approbation and complacency of his Father and his God and his everlasting communion and blessedness with his redeemed people in Heaven. It also includes the office and agency of the Holy Spirit in the instruction and sanctification of the spiritual body of the Lord Jesus Christ. And it includes the great and happy effects, which the Holy Spirit produces, through his special influence, by all the means that have been used since the world began, or shall be used until the world shall end, in order to accomplish the purpose of redemption. The everlasting gos-



pel includes the desires and the designs, the exertions and enjoyments of the ever blessed God, in respect to himself and his creatures; in respect to heaven, earth and hell; and in respect to whatever exists in the universe from eternity to eternity. Now, to whom shall be ascribed the purpose of redemption with its eternal and infinite connections and consequences? Who has made all things? and who has made all things for himself? And has he no system of conduct? Is it scriptural, is it rational, is it possible, to believe that God according to the everlasting gospel, has a supreme regard to himself in all things? and yet, that he has not decreed all things? If a single fact can be known, and if a single truth can be learned by rational creatures, it is in fact true, that God has decreed all things. There is not a more rational, or a more scriptural sentiment in the whole system of natural and revealed religion, than the doctrine of divine decrees.—The everlasting gospel is the eternal purpose of God, according to the counsel of his own will, by which for his own glory he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

3. If the gospel be the eternal system of divine conduct, then, according to the gospel, God causes all things by his supreme agency. The angel, whom John saw “fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them, that dwell on the earth, and

to every nation and kindred and tongue and people,” proclaimed with a loud voice the doctrines and duties, which compose the foundation of natural and revealed religion. This angel says, “Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him, that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” According to the everlasting gospel, fear, glory and worship are to be given to God by the nations and families of the earth. And they are to be given to him, on account of his supreme agency in the creation of all things. The whole system of the gospel exhibits the supreme agency of God, in the creation and government of all things, according to the eternal purpose of redemption through Jesus Christ.—It is absurd to suppose that God formed this purpose in the council of his own will, unless he were able and willing to accomplish it. But he cannot accomplish it, only by his own supreme agency. If we understand the origin, the nature and effects of the gospel, we shall be obliged to admit, that God is the supreme cause of all things. The supreme object of God in the purpose of redemption must influence the whole system of his conduct. From this object he cannot deviate in a single instance, unless he turn from himself and renounce his glory forever. His supreme object disposes and obliges God to cause whatever is best, and to prevent whatever is not best in its

eternal connections and consequences. God is the only being, who can know, and who can do what is best. And his knowledge and power enable and oblige him to do what is best, and to work all things after the counsel of his own will, which is perfect and infinite in wisdom and goodness. The gospel exhibits the supreme agency of God, throughout the universe, in the greatest brightness and beauty. If God be glorious, his gospel is glorious. And if his gospel is glorious, it is for the glory of his great name, that he should perfectly accomplish his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus. The glorious gospel of the ever blessed God, therefore, affords abundant and decisive evidence, that he creates and causes, by his supreme agency, whatever exists in the universe. If the everlasting gospel be a rational system, it must agree with the perfections of the everlasting God. And it is one of the plainest and strongest dictates of reason, that God is the creator, preserver, governor and proprietor of all things, and that he causes, by his holy and supreme agency, whatever comes into existence from eternity to eternity. This sentiment respecting the universal agency of God agrees with his natural and moral perfections, with his purposes and conduct, with his law and gospel, and with whatever exists in the universe. Nor is there, a single truth, that

is more fully and clearly taught in the scriptures, than the doctrine, that God is the supreme cause of all things. Moses says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Job says of God, "He is in one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth." The Psalmist says, "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas and all deep places." Solomon says, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." By Isaiah God says, "I am the Lord and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things." The Lord Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground, without your Father."—And the apostle says, by the Holy Spirit, God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." It is, then, as certain and as evident, that God causes all things, by his own supreme agency, as it is that God exists. The everlasting gospel, therefore, teaches us to believe, and warrants us to say, what the apostle says, in respect to God—"For, of him and through him and to him are all things: to whom be glory forever, Amen."

JUDAH.



## THE UNION OF CHRISTIANS IN HEAVEN.

The redemption of his people is the great object of God in the creation and government of his creatures. To obtain a correct knowledge of this object, it is necessary to perceive the character and condition of his people before they are redeemed; and their condition and their character when their redemption shall be completed in heaven. On these subjects we have abundant instruction in the holy scriptures. The scriptures plainly exhibit the character, with which the people of God are born into the world; and their character after they are renewed, while they remain in this state of trial. And they plainly exhibit their character and condition, when they shall be collected and united in the kingdom of glory. That the people of God are to be so formed in this life, as to be perfectly united in their future and eternal existence, we are frequently and plainly taught in the scriptures. The union of christians in heaven engaged the attention and the affections of the Lord Jesus Christ in his noted prayer before he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies. That the same subject constantly employed the exertions of the apostles is evident from their instructions to christians and christian churches, which are recorded in their epistles. And it is evident from the whole system of divine truth, that all the members of the

true church of God will finally be collected and formed into one society. But they are now greatly dispersed; and in many respects very different. Some members of the church have finished their labors and trials on earth and entered upon that rest, which remains for the people of God in heaven. Other members have been renewed, but are yet imperfect and afflicted in this state of sin and sorrow. There are other persons, who were given to Christ in the covenant of redemption, that yet live in their native blindness, enmity and unbelief. In these respects they, who are to be the united members of the Redeemer's spiritual body, are very different. They are also very different in other respects. They greatly differ in their constitutional temperament and their temporal circumstances. They also differ in their natural talents and intellectual acquirements. Nor are they less different in their spiritual endowments. Some have been endowed with the spirit of prophecy and the power of miracles. Respecting their services and sufferings in the kingdom of God, some have been endowed with one talent, some with two talents and some with five talents. In their moral character, as they are born into the world, though they are alike, yet being wholly selfish and sinful, they have no union of sentiment, affection, interest and enjoyment. That vast number of rational beings, who are

to compose the church of God in heaven and to be perfectly united in one body, as they are to be found from the commencement of their existence, until they shall be collected in the kingdom of glory, are in the greatest variety of the most discordant circumstances.—They form a perfect chaos. No two members of the church, which is to be formed into a society of perfect order, beauty, love and joy, are alike in any respect, except it be, that they are hateful and hate one another; until they are renewed by the Holy Spirit. Of such materials the spiritual temple of the living God is to be formed with such order and unity, that he may walk in it and dwell in it without the least offence or disturbance forever. To become perfectly harmonious and beautiful, all the members of the church, which is the body of Christ, must be united, formed and bound together by the tenderest and strongest bonds. Respecting the union of christians in heaven the following remarks may be worthy of particular attention.

1. All the members of the church will, in heaven, be united in sentiment. In this life the people of God have such a knowledge of divine truth, as is peculiar to themselves and as agrees with the divine oracles. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “It is written in the prophets—and they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, com-

eth unto me.” To the saints at Corinth the apostle writes, “He, that is spiritual, judgeth all things.” And John says to christians, “ye have an unction from the Holy One and know all things.”—Though the people of God have, in this life, a peculiar knowledge of divine subjects and do know the truth, as it is in Jesus, yet they are not “perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Respecting many subjects they are greatly ignorant and erroneous. But in heaven, though their knowledge will be limited forever, they will be free from darkness, error and delusion, respecting the subjects, on which they shall form and embrace any sentiment. The apostle says, “Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” The glory of God, without any veil, will shine upon his people in heaven. Their attention will be turned and fixed upon the same objects. And while they behold the same objects, in the pure and clear light of heaven, their views will exactly agree, so far as they extend. Though the views of some persons will be more enlarged than the views of other persons, yet there will be no discord in their views. So far as they advance, they will advance in the perfect light of truth, and be united in their sentiments.

2. In heaven the people of God will be perfectly united in affec-



tion. So far as their peculiar character is formed on earth, they are of one heart. They have been renewed by the Holy Spirit. And the "fruit of the Spirit is love." That pure and holy love, which is the moral perfection of the living God, and which he requires of his rational creatures, he produces in the hearts of his people. This love is the essence of their peculiar character, and forms their moral excellence and beauty. In the exercise of holy affections they love God with supreme and ardent love. They repent of their sins. They believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. They delight in his doctrines, commands and promises. They love all objects with impartial affection. And all holy beings they love with complacency. Let any object be placed before the minds of such beings, as are perfectly holy; and in view of it the same affections will arise in all their hearts. Though a vast number of very different objects will pass before the minds of the saints in heaven, the same pure and holy affections will be excited in the hearts of the innumerable multitude. They will be arrayed in the beauty of holiness. And holiness is the bond of perfection, which unites all holy beings in pure and ardent affection and friendship. Being perfect in love, all the members of the church in heaven will be affected in the same manner by every object they shall perceive. When the millions and millions of the redeemed

people of God shall be collected in heaven, there will never arise, during their eternal existence, the least discordant affection, though their hearts will be tried by every object, that can be placed before their minds. Holy love will fill their hearts. And they will dwell in pure and perfect love forever and ever.

3. All the members of the church in heaven will be united in interest. Among selfish creatures there are as many opposing interests, as there are individuals. For every one seeks his own. Hence selfish creatures are in a state of enmity and contention. Though they are alike in their moral character, being supremely and totally selfish, yet they are perfectly opposed and hostile in their interests.—That the members of the church may be perfectly united in interest, it is necessary no one should have any selfish interest; but that all should desire and promote the same objects. No one must seek any object, which all do not desire to have sought. Neither any one, nor any number of the saints in heaven, will seek any selfish or separate interest. Every one will esteem the happiness of the others according to its importance.—And they will be perfectly united in their estimation and promotion of the objects, which God has regarded and pursued in his purposes and exertions. This world has been in a state of constant enmity and violence, on account of the conflicting interests of differ-

ent nations and parties, of different families and individuals. Selfish feelings and separate interests have spread divisions, contentions and distresses over the face of the earth. But though there will forever be in heaven a greater number of persons, than have been upon earth at one time; and probably a greater number than have lived in all past ages; yet no one will ever seek or desire any selfish interest. But every member of Christ's body will seek the good of the whole body. And the whole body will seek the good of every member. They will be of one mind and of one heart respecting every object and every interest, they shall desire and promote.

4. The members of the church in heaven will be united in enjoyment. As they will be united in their knowledge, love and pursuit of the same objects, they will also be united in the objects and sources of their delight and happiness. The sources of their enjoyment will be pure, perfect, infinite and eternal. As their capacities will enlarge, their enjoyment will increase forever. The existence, perfections, designs and conduct of God will forever unfold, with increasing greatness, brightness and glory, to their minds. And it will be seen that "of God and through him and to him are all things." Every creature, every object, and every event, will, in its design, connections and consequences, display the glory of God, and excite and increase the

joy of his people. Hence, it is said to the children of God, "all things are yours." They are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. And all things will be owned and enjoyed by every saint. The universe will be enjoyed by every child of God in exact proportion to his knowledge and holiness.—The whole number of holy beings in heaven will form but one body in respect to the nature, the objects and the sources of their happiness. While every member of this body will be perfectly united with the other members in sentiment, affection and interest, they will be perfectly united in their pure and holy enjoyments. And they will be perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God forever.

This subject now offers to our attention a few remarks.

1. As the people of God will be perfectly united in heaven, there is no reason to believe that he will accept of more than one kind of religion. God will not approve of any religious sentiments, affections, interests and enjoyments, which do not accord with that state, to which he will bring his people in heaven. There is only one kind of religion, that God now requires and approves. There is but one system of religious sentiments, but one kind of religious affections, but one description of religious interests and enjoyments, among the various religious denominations, professions, exertions and interests, that God will ap-



prove in the day of final decision. There is but one religion in heaven; and there is but one religion, that can prepare any person to be in heaven. They whom God will approve in the day of judgment and admit into the kingdom of glory, must be of the same religion. Every religion, which does not agree with the word and the will of God, he now condemns. And what he now condemns he will never approve. In this state of ignorance and imperfection, real religion may exist in persons, who are in some respects different.—But God accepts of nothing, even in pious persons, but what agrees with his law and gospel.

2. They, who have gone from earth to heaven, have been essentially of the same religion. The first person whom God accepted and received to heaven, had the same religious character, which belonged to all other persons, who have gone to heaven. Abel was the first person, that ever left this world and entered the kingdom of God. His justification and salvation rested on the same foundation, on which all other persons rely, who are pardoned and saved from future and endless perdition. He complied with the same conditions of salvation, with which all other persons must comply in order to be saved. And he had the same spirit, and exercised the same holy and gracious affections, which all other persons must exercise, in order to be approved of God on earth and to be admit-

ted into heaven. The religion of Enoch and Noah, and of other saints before the flood, was the same, that God requires of all persons. What Moses and the prophets taught respecting the essence of religion has been confirmed by Jesus Christ and the apostles.—And the spirit of Moses, the spirit of Job, the spirit of Daniel and the spirit of Paul consisted in that holy love, without which no person can enter heaven, or be approved of God on earth. The religion, which God has approved in past ages, is what he now approves; and no other religion will he approve in future ages. That religion, which God approves and which he produces by his holy influence in the innumerable multitude of his redeemed people, is essentially and exactly the same thing in all ages of the world.

3. Since they, who enter heaven, must be perfectly united in their views, feelings, interests and enjoyments, it is of the highest importance that every person be accurately and thoroughly instructed in the true religion.—What often passes for religion in this world is totally different from the religion of heaven. Many persons hope and believe that they are in the way to heaven, though they have no communion in any respect with the true church of God. And they, who are not taught the nature of the only true religion, which unites in one body all the people of God, will deceive and destroy them-

selves. They, who are not taught the true religion, are not lead to heaven; nor are they shown the way. But they are lead to destruction. It is, then, highly important, that every person should have a correct and thorough knowledge of that religion, which is necessary to an admission into the pure, perfect and blessed society of heaven. And it is the duty of every person to be exceedingly watchful and cautious what religious sentiments, affections, interests and enjoyments he approves. For they, who do not in these respects agree with the true church of God, can never have any part or lot in the kingdom of glory.

4. If they, who enter heaven, must be perfectly united, then it is vain to attempt to unite religious professors in such a manner, as does not accord with the union of heaven. Many have desired and attempted to confound all distinctions and differences in respect to religion. And it would doubtless, be pleasing to the enemies of the true church of God, to be received and treated as real christians. But any professed and apparent union of religious professors, that is not founded on the essential and fundamental doctrines of the gospel and maintained by the spirit of disinterested benevolence and directed to the glory of the only living and true God, is wholly vain and foolish. It is not a real union and cannot be permanent. Any religious union of sentiment, affec-

tion, interest and enjoyment, that is not formed in view of God and his law, of Jesus Christ and the gospel, with such a spirit of benevolence and self-denial, as constitutes the essence of moral virtue, must end in discord, hatred and confusion. Such a union is founded on ignorance, or error; and can be maintained only by wickedness and deceit. All such unions will be condemned and dissolved by the supreme head of the true church. Nothing can be more vain and unwise than attempts to unite religious professors in such a manner, as does not agree with the wise and holy unity of heaven.

5. In view of the manner, in which all christians will be united in heaven, we may perceive the proper way to promote a real union of christians on earth. In heaven christians will be understandingly and cordially united in sentiment. And christians on earth cannot really be united in any respect any further than they know and love the sound doctrines of the gospel. There may be a union of ignorance and a union of error among religious professors. But they will not produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness; but the bitter fruits of unrighteousness and ungodliness. Let christians and christian churches unite in the knowledge and love of divine truth and then they may safely and firmly unite their hearts in the spiritual interests and enjoyments of the gospel and of the kingdom of God. And it does es-



pecially become the ministers of the gospel, at this day, to be able truly to say, we have "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." With such a spirit and by such conduct, they may greatly promote the real union of christians on earth in sentiment, affection, interest and enjoyment; and be instrumental of their preparation for the pure, perfect and eternal communion of heaven.

ZEBULON.

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SERMONS.—No. I.

DIVINE TRUTH THE MEANS OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH.

I. PETER II. 2.—*As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*

The Lord Jesus Christ commanded Peter, in the most affecting manner, to feed his sheep and his lambs. With the importance of this duty the mind of Peter appears to have been deeply impressed, when he wrote his epistles to his christian brethren. But it is evident, that the apostle could not feed the flock of God, unless they should desire and receive the proper food for their souls. This food consists in the pure and simple instructions of the gospel.—These instructions, the apostle,

in our text, urges christians to desire for their spiritual nourishment. And he plainly intimates, that their growth in the christian life, depended on their reception of these instructions. It is then the duty of christians to desire and receive the instructions of the gospel, that they may grow. This important duty is enjoined upon christians in the words of our text: "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow by it." These words place before us the following sentiment, the growth of christians depends on their receiving the instructions of the gospel.

To illustrate this sentiment it is proposed,

I. To show what a proper reception of these instructions implies; and

II. To show that the growth of christians depends on their receiving the instructions of the gospel. It is proposed,

I. To show what a proper reception of the instructions of the gospel implies. Of the great number, who profess to receive these instructions, but few appear to grow in the divine life. And the growth of these, commonly, appears slow and small. These evils, there is reason to believe, arise chiefly from their not receiving the instructions of the gospel. In respect to this subject, there are doubtless many, who wholly deceive and destroy themselves; while others are greatly deceived and injured in their spiritual

interests. It is then highly important to consider what a proper reception of divine instruction implies. On this subject it may be observed,

1. That the instructions of the gospel may be received, they must be understood. There may be a speculative knowledge of divine truth, while it is not cordially received. But it can never be cordially received, without such a knowledge of it. It is through the understanding, that the truth enters and affects the heart. For it cannot enter the heart, unless it be previously perceived and understood. A person may imagine he receives the gospel, while through ignorance, or error, he wholly misunderstands, and rejects its essential instructions. A person's views of these instructions may be very partial and defective, while they are not wholly unknown, nor rejected. But the instructions of the gospel are never received any farther than they are correctly understood in their nature, connections, tendency and consequences. Though it is often supposed, that holy affections do not depend on accurate speculations, yet there is no reason to believe that any affections are holy, unless they are excited and supported by correct views of divine truth. How can a person, with proper affections, receive the true doctrines of human depravity, regeneration, atonement and justification, unless he understand these doctrines? How can a person ex-

ercise repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, unless he has a knowledge of these duties? How can a person be truly useful in promoting the glory of God and the happiness of his fellow creatures, without the knowledge of these important objects? How can a person enjoy the pardon of sin, the favor of God, the hope of glory and the earnest of heaven, if he be ignorant or erroneous respecting these blessings? It was a maxim in the church of Rome, that ignorance is the mother of devotion. But so far as ignorance and error prevail, neither real devotion nor real religion in any respect can exist. Real religion is founded on the knowledge of divine truth. Tho' in real religion there is implied something more than accurate speculations, yet it cannot exist while the understanding is ignorant or erroneous. Whatever any persons may profess and whatever may be their feelings, they can never receive, unless they understand, the instructions of the gospel.

2. That the instructions of the gospel may be received, they must not only be understood, but also believed. It can hardly be supposed, that any person can fully and correctly understand and yet disbelieve the instructions of the gospel. For such an understanding of these instructions would imply and include a knowledge of the evidence, by which they are supported. And when the evi-



dence of divine truth is perceived it will carry conviction to the mind, though the truth be hated and rejected by an evil heart. They, who now disbelieve and reject the gospel, will know that it is true ; and then, though they may not love and receive it, yet they will be obliged to believe its essential doctrines. Sometimes by a belief of the truth is meant in the scriptures, the same thing as receiving it with proper affections. But such a faith implies something very different from a speculative conviction, that the gospel and its essential instructions are true.—Persons may mistake a doctrinal conviction of the truth with its effects for saving faith. But as the devils believe there is one God and tremble ; so the devils and wicked men may believe, that all the instructions of the gospel are true and yet derive no saving benefit from such a belief. But though there may be a doctrinal belief of the truth without saving faith, there cannot be such faith without a doctrinal belief of the truth. A person may be fully convinced of the truth of the gospel and of its essential doctrines, while they are not received with holy affections. But no one can ever properly receive the instructions of the gospel without a thorough conviction and a firm belief that they are true.

3. A proper reception of the instructions of the gospel, implies holy love of divine truth. The objects which divine truth pre-

sents to the mind, may excite the affections and produce a high degree of delight, while no holy love of truth exists in the heart. Whether the affections be holy or unholy, can never be known from the nature of the objects, towards which they are excited, but only from the nature of the affections themselves. Many persons, who heard Christ preach, heard him gladly, and did many things, while their affections were unholy, and while they neither truly received nor loved his instructions. There may be false and sinful affections in view of divine truth.—When the truth is received in a proper manner, it is loved for its own beauty and excellence. And then it is spontaneously desired and received, as the new-born babe desires the milk of the breast. Divine truth exactly agrees with the affections, which the Holy Spirit produces in the hearts of christians. But without the pure love of divine truth, it is never rightly received and affords no holy delight. But since real christians have tasted that the Lord is gracious, as new-born babes, they desire the sincere milk of the word. They have that pure and ardent love of the truth, which is so often mentioned in the scriptures. Job says, “Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips ; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.” The Psalmist says, “Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it. I

love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold."—They who have such a pure and holy love of the truth, desire and receive the instructions of the gospel, as the food, the support and nourishment of their souls.

4. The practical influence of divine truth is implied in a proper reception of the instructions of the gospel. When these instructions are clearly understood, firmly believed and greatly loved, they will have a deep and constant influence upon a person's feelings, designs, pursuits, exertions and enjoyments. No other objects can so deeply affect the human mind, or so powerfully influence the conduct of human beings, as those objects, which are exhibited by the light of divine truth. So far as the truth is rightly received, it affects and governs the conduct. It fills the heart and directs and controls the words and actions. If a person would know whether he properly receives the instructions of the gospel, let him examine his own conduct. For whatever may be our speculative knowledge, our doctrinal belief and professed love of the truth, we do not rightly receive the instructions of the gospel, unless they affect and govern our actions. But if we truly receive the instructions of the gospel, their influence will be manifest in the constancy and vigor of holy affections and exertions.—A healthy child desires and receives his proper food. And he shows that he is healthy, and that

he receives his proper nourishment by his cheerful looks, lively spirits, and sprightly conduct. So a living and healthy christian desires and receives the sincere milk of the word, and is nourished and strengthened by it. And he shows that he is alive and healthy, by his cheerful obedience and faithful exertions in the service of God. No one has any reason to believe, or affords any evidence to other persons, that he truly receives the instructions of the gospel, unless he experience and manifest their practical influence upon his heart and life. A proper reception of the instructions of the gospel implies, that they are understood, believed, loved and obeyed. It is now proposed,

II. To show that the growth of christians depends on their receiving these instructions.

Though this doctrine be evident from the scriptures, yet many persons do not appear to perceive that it is true. Many professors of religion appear to themselves much greater in religion, and in their own opinion grow much faster, when they walk in the darkness of ignorance and error, than they do, when they are brought into the light of divine truth. And some persons, who appear to be real christians, have the lowest and humblest opinion of their religious character and attainments, when they are placed under the most plain and faithful instructions of the gospel. How then does it ap-



pear, that the growth of christians depends on their receiving these instructions? To this question it may be answered,

1. It is only by the instructions of the gospel, that christians can perceive their imperfections.— From these instructions christians may obtain a thorough and correct knowledge of themselves in all respects. They exhibit their relations and their obligations to their creator, their fellow creatures and themselves. By the light of divine truth christians discover the nature, the reason and the importance of the duties, which God requires both in the law and in the gospel. They also discover the evil and hateful nature of sin and the extent and bitterness of their own depravity. From the gospel they discover their ignorance and error, their wretchedness and ill desert. Without the light of divine truth they would never see, that in themselves, they are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. But in the same degree, in which they receive the instructions of the gospel, they have a sight and sense of the greatness of their imperfections. The most ignorant and erroneous persons always possess the greatest degree of self-conceit, self-righteousness and self-sufficiency. But they, who imagine they have already attained and are already perfect, never make any progress in truth and duty. A knowledge of their imperfections is absolutely neces-

sary in order to show christians the nature, the importance and the necessity of their growth in the divine life. But without the light of divine truth they never clearly discover their imperfections. And without a discovery of their imperfections, they would think themselves perfect. And then they would neither grow nor perceive their need of growth in religious attainments.

2. It is by the instructions of the gospel that christians are shown the nature of that perfection, which they are required to pursue and attain. Nothing but the gospel exhibits to any of mankind their real character, condition and duty, as sinful and guilty creatures. Though the gospel provides and offers pardon and life for the chief of sinners, it does not in the least approve of what is sinful, or allow the smallest indulgence in iniquity. It unfolds and confirms the law of God; and requires the same perfection, which the law requires, not as the foundation of justification, but as necessary to an admission into heaven and as the duty of every human being. The more christians become acquainted with the gospel, the more are they convinced, that it requires they should be a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The gospel requires christians to cleanse themselves from all the filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Without a thorough and faithful reception of the gos-

pel, persons may imagine, that they may continue in sin, because grace abounds. But divine truth teaches christians to see and feel the importance and necessity of being holy, as God is holy, and pure, even as Christ is pure. It is only by the instructions of the gospel, that christians are offered the full pardon of their sins, while they are, at the same time, required and obliged to pursue and attain absolute freedom from sin and perfection in holiness.

3. Christians derive proper motives for growth in religious attainments from the instructions of the gospel. So far as any persons are involved in ignorance and error, they do not perceive the motives, by which they should be induced to advance in the knowledge and practice of their duty. But the instructions of the gospel place before the minds of christians and impress upon their hearts all the motives, which the universe can afford, to do what is right and to hate and avoid what is evil. In view of these motives their holy affections are excited and maintained and their holy exertions receive direction and encouragement. The more clearly christians discern the instructions of the gospel and the more deeply the truth enters their hearts, so much the more are they moved to advance in the ways of God.— If all christians had such views of the gospel as Paul had, they would see and feel the motives, which awakened his affections and

influenced his exertions. And then every christian could say with him—"This one thing I do, forgetting the things that are behind and reaching forth unto those things, that are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." If christians received the truth, as the Lord Jesus Christ received it, when he was on earth, they would follow his holy and perfect example. Then the motives, by which he was moved and governed, would move and govern all their feelings and conduct.— He always acted from a clear sight and deep sense of divine truth. And the motives, which should influence christians, are wholly derived from the pure truths of the gospel. If christians could discover their imperfections and that perfection in holiness, which they ought to attain, without the light of divine truth; yet they could perceive no sufficient motives to exert themselves for a constant and faithful progress in the divine life. Every motive to such progress is derived from the instructions of the gospel.

4. The instructions of the gospel discover to christians the only source, to which they can look for growth in spiritual attainments. For this purpose they cannot safely look to themselves, nor to any outward means, nor to any created beings. The living and true God, as he is revealed in the gospel, is the only source, from which they can derive their christian growth.—



Without the knowledge of God in Christ Jesus, his people would neither grow nor even live.— Christ says to his disciples, “Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine; ye are the branches; he, that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing.” It is wholly through the truth that christians abide in Christ and that he abides in their hearts. On this spiritual communion between the Lord Jesus Christ and his people, their life and growth depends.— And this communion depends upon their receiving the instructions of the gospel. These instructions so bring God into the view of his people, that they live and grow in him.

In view of God they advance in knowledge, holiness, usefulness and happiness. He is their light and life and strength. Their knowledge of God and their communion with him are begun, maintained and completed by their reception of divine truth. From God, as he is revealed in the gospel, christians derive all their spiritual attainments. Without the instructions of the gospel they can have no such views of God, as are necessary to their progress in the christian life. It is then of the utmost importance, that christians, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that

they may grow by it. For their growth depends upon a proper reception of divine truth.

#### IMPROVEMENT.

1. From what is implied in a proper reception of divine truth, there is reason to conclude that many persons deceive themselves in respect to this duty. Many to whom the instructions of the gospel are sent, do not appear to have their minds properly affected or engaged by divine truth. Nor does it appear to have any proper influence upon their conduct. It is certain that many who hear the truth, do not in a proper manner receive it. There are those who constantly hear the gospel and yet neither understand, nor believe, nor love, nor obey its first, its plainest and most important duties. They resemble the way-side, which the Savior mentions in the parable of the sower. And he says, “When any one heareth the word of the kingdom and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way-side.” There are other hearers of the gospel, who appear to be suddenly and joyfully affected by divine truth; but they resemble the stony places. And the Savior says, “He, that received the seed into stony places, the same is he, that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for

awhile: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." There are other hearers of the gospel, who speculatively understand its instructions with a great degree of correctness and are convinced of the reality and importance of experimental and practical religion; but they resemble the thorny ground. "He also, that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." These three classes have, doubtless, formed in past ages and do at the present time form far the greater portion of the hearers of the gospel. But no individual of these classes does ever properly and profitably receive divine instruction. If they imagine they perform any duty in the manner, in which they hear the gospel, they wholly deceive themselves.

2. From what a proper reception of divine truth implies, it is evident that no persons will receive it, unless their minds be prepared for it. Whether they, who hear the word of God, receive or reject it, depends upon the state of their own minds.—Persons may read the word of God and hear the preaching of the gospel as long as they live, but they will not receive divine truth without proper attention and proper affections. Without a

good and honest heart no person ever did or ever will receive the pure and holy instructions of the gospel. Divine truth must be desired and regarded with supreme love to God and holy delight in his law, or it will not be received with approbation and complacency. If the minds of persons be divided and distracted by other objects, God and his word can have no place in their hearts. Or if a person's mind be heavy and stupid, it will be unaffected by the great objects, which are exhibited by the light of divine truth. No person will properly receive the word of God, unless he has a heart to obey the following counsel of the wise preacher in Israel. "My son, if thou wilt receive my words and hide my commandments with thee, so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver and searchest for her as for hid treasure, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." Again he says, "When wisdom entereth into thine heart and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee." Without a holy and ardent affection for divine truth, no person will, as a



new-born babe, desire the sincere milk of the word.

3. If the growth of Christians depends on their proper reception of religious instruction, then christians always decline, whenever they become careless in respect to this duty. While, as new-born babes, they desire the instructions of the gospel, they do, in all respects, advance in the divine life. But if they become indifferent and inattentive to the word of God, they neglect the means of their growth. And then they decline in their views, feelings, exertions and enjoyments. Negligence and carelessness in respect to divine truth are decisive evidence of spiritual declension.

4. Since the growth of christians depends on their receiving the instructions of the gospel, whenever christians are restored from spiritual declension they will experience a renewed and increased desire for divine truth.—As a person, who has been sick, on the return of health, has a strong desire for food; so christians, when recovered from spiritual disorders, will constantly and eagerly desire the pure and wholesome instructions of the gospel, which are the proper food for their souls. This desire for divine truth is the best and surest sign of recovery from spiritual stupidity and declension.

5. Since the growth of christians depends upon the reception of divine truth, a desire for in-

struction is the most favourable appearance in religious professors. It is more favourable than a high degree of confidence, that they are christians. Such confidence in religious professors very generally arises from ignorance and delusion. A desire for instruction is more favourable than a confident profession of religious enjoyment. Such a profession often arises from a false hope and a false faith. Without a desire for divine truth, there is no prospect of christian growth in religious professors. Nor is there any evidence of christian life. The best sign of life and the fairest prospect of growth in the professors of religion consist in an ardent, humble, and obedient desire for spiritual nourishment.

6. If the growth of christians depends on a proper reception of divine instruction, then, in order to their growth, they must remove and avoid whatever prevents their reception of the truth. In our context Peter says, "The word of the Lord endureth forever, and this is the word, which by the gospel is preached unto you."—He then says, "Therefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted, that the Lord is gracious."

SINNERS CANNOT BE SAVED WITHOUT  
REPENTANCE.

There are many sinners, we have reason to conclude, who live in the hope that they shall be saved when they die, without exercising that repentance which is described and required in the word of God. Some sinners appear to hope for salvation on one ground, and some on another. Some sinners appear to hope for salvation on the ground of their morality. Others hope for it, because, in their view, they are such small sinners, that it would be unjust in God not to save them. And others hope for it, because they think God is so merciful, that he will save all mankind, let them live and die as they will. But if such hopes are delusive and must fail in the trying hour, it is desirable, if possible, to convince sinners of it, before it is forever too late.—I shall attempt, therefore, to make it appear that sinners cannot be saved without repentance. To do this, I propose in the first place to describe repentance, and then show why sinners cannot be saved without it.

1. Repentance is to be described. Repentance is a change of mind in respect to sin. The feelings of a true penitent towards sin, are opposite to the feelings that he once had towards it. While impenitent, he loved sin, and delighted in the practice of it. But now he hates sin for its own sake, or on account of its own inherent

turpitude and baseness. Sin consists primarily in selfishness, in a person's loving himself as much as he is bound and required to love God; and it operates in supreme and deadly enmity to him. The true penitent no longer loves and cherishes this selfish, sordid temper, but feels it to be the greatest of evils, the most grievous of burdens, from which he longs to be delivered. He loathes, abases and condemns himself on account of his sinfulness, and turns from it with all his heart. And he utters the feelings and desires of his broken and contrite spirit in such language as this: "Mine iniquities are gone over my head. I am troubled, and bowed down greatly. I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Such exercises and feelings were evidently included in the repentance of Job, in the repentance of David, and in the repentance of every humbled sinner, whose character is delineated in scripture. It may also be remarked, that although sin is the object of repentance; yet this is called "repentance towards God," because it flows from supreme love to God, against whom sin is committed, and whose character and government the commission of it tends to injure. Repentance, then, is a change of mind in respect to sin, which arises from a change of feelings towards God and his glorious government, and which issues in a new and holy life. I am to show,



II. Why sinners cannot be saved without repentance.

The following are some of the reasons.

1. Sinners cannot be saved without repentance, because without this they cannot be pardoned, cannot be freed from the penalty of the law. Pardon is procured only by Christ's atonement, which prepares the way for the bestowment of that blessing upon penitent sinners; but does not prepare the way for the bestowment of it upon the impenitent. It would be just as inconsistent for God to pardon the impenitent through the atonement, as it would be for him to pardon the penitent, had no atonement been made. The impenitent are God's mortal foes. Hence, were he to pardon them he would deny himself, and blot out all the glory of his reign forever. In a word, should God remit the penalty of his law to the impenitent transgressors of it, he would exhibit himself, not as the hater and punisher, but as the lover and rewarder of iniquity; and his character would sink at once in the view of all his intelligent creatures. He can no more do it, therefore, than he can cease to be God. Jesus Christ is set forth to be a propitiation, that God's righteousness may be declared, and that he may be just, in justifying or pardoning the penitent and believing. Accordingly, he promises to forgive the penitent, but not the impenitent, and has

made repentance an indispensable condition of forgiveness. Now, since God never does, and never can pardon the impenitent, they cannot be saved without repentance; for they cannot be saved without being pardoned. Surely, those who are under the curse of God's law, and on whom his wrath abideth, cannot see life. I add,

2. That without repentance, sinners cannot participate in that pure and holy happiness, which is an essential part of the gospel salvation. Were it not inconsistent with the moral rectitude of God, for him to forgive the impenitent, and were he to do it, still, it would be impossible for them to enjoy the blessedness of heaven. Love to God and complacency in his government are essential to true happiness, which is to be found only in him. But the impenitent are hostile to God, and highly displeased with all the operations of his hand. How then could they be happy in heaven itself, where they would be forever surrounded with objects of their supreme aversion and abhorrence? The transcendent manifestations of Jehovah's glory, which swell the joys and wake the songs of the celestial hosts, who love him, must be a source of ceaseless anguish to all who hate him, to all the impenitent. It is impossible in the nature of things for them to be saved, for them to be made happy with such hearts as they possess. Their sinfulness, their impenitence must totally disqualify them for

any true enjoyment, either in this world, or in that which is to come.

1. If what has been said of the nature of repentance is true, then they are mistaken, who suppose it consists in a person's being sorry for sin, because it exposes him to punishment, or in wishing that he had not been born a sinner, or that Adam had never fallen, or that moral evil had never entered the universe. If a just view has been given of repentance, then such sorrows and wishes constitute no essential part of it. They are, indeed, if not associated with other affections, the sorrows and desires of an impenitent heart. He who truly repents, is delivered from that worldly sorrow which the slavish fear of punishment produces. In his heart, he says amen to the curse of the law, and accepts the punishment of his iniquities, as God requires. And instead of wishing that he had been born sinless, or that Adam had retained his original purity, or that evil had never existed, or that God's plan of government had been different from what it is; instead of having such idle wishes, such criminal desires, he voluntarily lies in the deepest self-abasement before God, on account of the treasonable part he has acted against him, and desires and prays to be saved from sin and made holy. And while he has an affecting view of the evil of sin, and of its tendency to reproach the divine character, and destroy the universe, he rejoices in the assur-

ance that God will cause even this evil, hateful, all-destructive thing to praise him, and promote the blessedness of his holy kingdom.

2. How gloomy are the prospects of impenitent sinners! We have seen that there is both a moral and natural impossibility of their ever being saved in impenitence. There is no true happiness for them on earth. There is no true happiness for them in heaven. There is no true happiness for them in the universe. They must, persisting in their impenitence, be eternally miserable.— They do feel miserable *here*, in proportion to the clearness and strength of their impressions of divine truth. And when they shall be summoned into the world of spirits, and open their eyes to its cloudless light, to shut them no more forever; when they shall be made to see God, and Christ, and all spiritual objects, as far as the impenitent *can* see them;— when divine truth shall thus shine into their understandings and consciences in all the brightness of eternity, their souls must, in the nature of things, be filled with the keenest remorse, and anguish, and despair. And besides, that God who is faithful to execute his threatnings, as well as to fulfil his promises, will inflict upon them the just but awful penalty of his law. Nothing then awaits them, but the endless wailings and torments of the damned.



*Finally.* By all the tender and solemn considerations which have been suggested, let sinners be persuaded to repent and turn to God without delay. Whatever they do short of repentance, they are going away farther and farther from God, from Christ, from heaven; and are ripening for destruction, and hastening to it. But if they will now only exercise repentance towards God, he will graciously pardon them and save them with an everlasting salvation. He will prepare them to engage in the holy employments of heaven, and will put them in possession of its pure and imperishable joys.

THEOPHILUS.

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THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE OF MRS.  
P —— AS STATED IN A SERMON,  
PREACHED SOON AFTER HER DEATH.

“On the first Sabbath in June, 18—, Mrs. P —— made a public profession of the religion of Christ. The account which she then gave of her religious exercises, was clear and satisfactory. In this statement, she said, “that ten years since, my attention was drawn to the great realities of religion, and my mind impressed with them. Unwilling to be saved in the gospel way, I went about to establish a righteousness of my own. God was, then, pleased to show me my error.” Her conviction became less powerful and pungent, but still continued. Four

years before her union with the church, her conviction returned with great force and pungency.— The following are nearly her own words concerning herself at that time :—“I then saw myself justly condemned by God’s holy law, and thought, that if ever I was saved, it must be through the merits of the Redeemer. I felt great opposition to the doctrine of sovereign grace; but I think that God was pleased to reconcile me to it, and to give me to rejoice in it as the only ground of hope for perishing sinners.” She remained much in doubt concerning her spiritual state, until the winter before she made a public profession of religion.— While hearing a sermon on the unreasonableness of being unresolved concerning religion, she said, “it pleased God to remove all doubts from my mind, and to give me to rejoice in him with great joy of heart. I had, also, such a view of the condescension and love of Christ in suffering for sinners, as I never had before. There seemed to be a new song put into my mouth, even, praise to God.— Since that time, I have had fears, that I was deceived; but I think, as far as I know my own heart, that I love religion and have a desire to live a holy life.” From the time of her making a public profession of religion, until her sickness, she had an increasing sense of the sinfulness of her heart and a growing attachment to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel. She was confined with sickness,

nearly two years and a half. During three or four of the first weeks, she was in great darkness and doubt. After this, she was for a time very calm. As a general fact, she was in great darkness and doubt of mind, for the three succeeding months. It was her wish to be considered and prayed for as an unrenowned person. Her fears were, that she had deceived herself and others, though without any intention or apprehension of it, at the time. At length, her doubts and fears were removed and her soul was filled with joy and peace. Her views were so clear and her evidence so decisive and full, that she thought she could never more doubt and would not again despair. Until the winter before her death, she remained, generally, calm in mind; but that season, she was under occasional darkness and dejection. It did not appear that she ever fell into that despairing state, after the three months which have been mentioned. From time to time, she had those clear discoveries and lively views of spiritual things, which raised her above her sufferings, and led her to say, that it would be ingratitude to God ever again to doubt. It may be proper to observe, when she was relieved from her state of darkness and distress, that she was conscious of having the same exercises and feelings which she had when she first entertained a hope. In her most lucid intervals, it was evident to her mind, that she experienced

a real change of heart, at the time she first supposed, and before she united with the church. One season of light and peace deserves special notice. It was during the last winter. The most correct view of it may be given by using her own words. "I am as happy as I can be. I do not know that I am capable of sustaining any more happiness." Her light, joy and enjoyment appeared to be as great as she was able to bear. This state of feeling lasted two or three days.

It may be useful to state the evident causes of her fears and doubts. *Her bodily disease.* It led her to view every thing on the darkest side. *The sense she had of the sinfulness of her heart.*—It did not seem to her, that one whose heart was so sinful, could be a christian. *She feared that her faith, humility and confidence in God and resignation to his will, originated in selfishness,* and that she might, after all, be deceived. During the last months of her sickness, which was very severe, much of her fear and discouragement arose from this consideration, *that she felt no more willing to endure the distress that was laid upon her.* She had been so long and so frequently in agonies of body, that she could not think upon the return of them, but with dread and horror. She said, that if she could feel entirely willing, at all times, to endure all the distress laid upon her, she should think that she was a real

christian. At sometimes she felt willing; at others, she was ready to shrink from it. Another thing which evidently led her to form conclusions against herself, was, *that she judged more from mere feeling, than from faith, submission and other christian graces.* One cause more should be mentioned. *It was a sense of the importance of religion.* This was so great as often to excite strong fears of being deceived. The danger and the consequences of entertaining a false hope were deeply impressed upon her mind, and led her to doubt whether her hope might not be that of the hypocrite, which should perish.

Religion was the great and leading subject of her habitual thoughts. She often enjoyed its consolations and almost continually its supports. Often was she heard to say, were it not for religion, I must sink under my distress. It is all the consolation which I have. She desired to be entirely conformed to God and to have no will of her own, and that all she endured might be for his glory. More than once, she told me that she had but one fear, or concern, which was that she should not have patience to endure what should be laid upon her. She had resigned herself, her relations and her all to God, and felt entirely willing to leave all with

him and go at his call. Death seemed to have no terrors. It was evident that she had an uncommon experimental acquaintance with religious truths. What many talk about, concerning religion, she actually felt. Sin was her great aversion, and for it she desired to be deeply humbled before God. She had a great sense of the goodness of God, and of constant dependance on him for every spiritual and temporal favor. Perhaps, no instance occurs, in which persons are more desirous of being faithfully dealt with in their religious concerns. It was her repeated request to be carefully examined as to her spiritual views and exercises. "How dreadful," she observed, "would it be, if after all, I should be deceived." She had great anxiety for those of her connections who were strangers to religion, and without hope and without God in the world. She met death undismayed. On the day of her death, she sent for me. When I arrived she said, she had but a few hours to live. She was asked, if death were alarming to her. The reply was, no. It is believed, and upon good evidence, that she left the world in peace, and has gone to be with Christ. In her there is a new evidence of the truth and reality of experimental religion."



## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

VIEW OF THE MISSIONS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Board has established missions, in the order of time in which they will now be named, at Bombay—in Ceylon—among the Cherokees, Choctaws, and Cherokees of the Arkansaw—at the Sandwich Islands—and in Western Asia. It has, also, taken measures to ascertain the religious and moral state of the southern and western countries of South America, with a view to missionary labors in that interesting part of the world.

### I. Mission at Bombay.

Commenced in 1813. This mission has three stations.—Bombay, Mahim, and Tannah.

*Bombay*.—A large city on an island of the same name. It is the capital of all the British possessions on the western side of the peninsula, and is the primary seat of the mission.

Rev. Gordon Hall, missionary; Mr. James Garrett, printer.

*Mahim*.—Six miles from Bombay, on the north part of the island.

Rev. Allen Graves, missionary.

*Tannah*.—The principal town on the island of Salsette, twenty-five miles from Bombay.

Rev. John Nichols, missionary.

### II. Mission in Ceylon.

This mission was established in the district of Jaffna, which is the northern extremity of the island of Ceylon, in October, 1816. It has five stations—Tillipally, Batticotta, Oodooville, Panditeripo, and Manepy.

*Tillipally*.—Nine miles north from Jaffnapatam.

Rev. Daniel Poor, missionary; Nicholas Permander, native preacher.

*Batticotta*.—Six miles north-west of Jaffnapatam.

Rev. Benjamin C. Meigs, and Rev. Henry Woodward, missionaries. Gabriel Tissera, native preacher.

*Oodooville*.—Five miles north of Jaffnapatam.

Rev. Miron Winslow, missionary. Francis Malleappa, native preacher.

*Panditeripo*.—Nine miles north-west of Jaffnapatam.

Rev. John Scudder, M. D. missionary. George Koch, native medical assistant.

*Manepy*.—Four miles and a half north-west of Jaffnapatam.

Rev. Levi Spaulding, missionary.

### III. Mission among the Cherokees.

On the 13th of January, 1817, Mr. Kingsbury arrived at Chichamaugh, since called Brainerd, and commenced preparations for an establishment there. The mission among the Cherokees has, at the present time, six stations—Brainerd, Creek-Path, Carmel, Hightower, Willstown, and Haweis.

*Brainerd*.—The oldest station of the Board among the Indians. It is situated within the chartered limits of Tennessee, on the Chickamaugh Creek, 250 miles N. W. of Augusta; 150 S. E. of Nashville; and 110 S. W. of Knoxville.

Rev. Ard Hoyt, miss.; Dr. Elizur Butler, Physician; Mr. Sylvester Ellis, schoolmaster; Messrs. John Vail, Henry Parker, and Frederick Elsworth, farmers;

Messrs. Erastus Dean, and Ainsworth E. Blunt, mechanics.

*Carmel.*---Formerly called Taloney. Sixty-two miles S. E. from Brainerd, on what is called the Federal Road. A school was established here in May 1820. Mr. Hall resided here six months before the opening of the school.

Rev. Daniel S. Butrick, missionary, and Mr. Moody Hall, schoolmaster.

*Creek Path.*---One hundred miles W. S. W. of Brainerd. A school was established here in April 1820.

Rev. William Potter, missionary.

*Hightower.*---On a river named E-tow-ee, but corrupted into Hightower; eighty miles S. S. E. of Brainerd, and thirty-five miles west of south from Carmel. A school commenced in April of the present year.

Mr. Isaac Proctor, schoolmaster.

*Willstown.*---About fifty miles S. W. of Brainerd. A school was established at this station, in May last.

Rev. William Chamberlain, missionary.

*Haweis.*---About sixty S. of Brainerd. Preparations are making for a school.

Mr. John C. Elsworth, schoolmaster.

#### IV. Mission among the Choctaws.

The mission among the Cherokees being in successful operation, Mr. Kingsbury and Mr. Williams left Brainerd, about the first of June 1818, for the Choctaw nation. They selected a site for their station, and about the 15th of August felled the first tree.—“The place was entirely new, and covered with lofty trees; but the ancient mounds, which here and there appeared, shewed, that it had been once the habitation of men.” The station was named Elliot, in honor of the “Apostle

of the American Indians.” This mission has six stations.—Elliot, Mayhew, Bethel, Emmaus, and two which have not yet received names.

*Elliot.*---Within the chartered limits of the state of Mississippi; on the Yalo Busha creek; about forty miles above its junction with the Yazoo; 400 miles W. S. W. of Brainerd; and 145 from the Walnut Hills, on the Mississippi.

Mr. Cyrus Byington, licensed preacher and missionary; Dr. Wm. W. Pride, physician; Mr. Joel Wood, schoolmaster; and Messrs. John Smith and Zechariah Howes, farmers.

*Mayhew.*---On the Ook-tib-beha-creek, twelve miles above its junction with the Tombigbee, and 100 miles east of Elliot. Commenced in the spring of 1820.

Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, missionary and superintendent of the Choctaw mission; Mr. William Hooper, schoolmaster; Mr. Calvin Cushman, farmer; and Messrs. Philo P. Stewart and Samuel Wisner, mechanics.

*Bethel.*---On the Natchez road, south-west of Mayhew. A school was established here in November 1821.

Mr. Loring S. Williams, schoolmaster.

Mr. Stephen B. Macomber, schoolmaster, resides here for the present.

*Emmaus.*---About 140 miles southeasterly from Mayhew. Commenced near the latter part of 1822.

Mr. Moses Jewell, schoolmaster, and Mr. Anson Gleason, mechanic.

Mr. Elijah Bardwell, farmer, and Mr. Anson Dyer, schoolmaster, commenced preparations for a school near the centre of the Six Towns, during the summer past.

Rev. Alfred Wright, missionary, resides in this district.

Mr. Adin C. Gibbs, schoolmaster, has also commenced a school, recently, in the neighborhood of Mingo Moo-sha-la-tubbee, in the S. D. District of the nation.

Mr. Samuel Moseley, licensed preacher and missionary; Messrs. David Wright and David Gage, schoolmasters; Messrs. William Holland and Josiah Hemmingway, farmers; and Mr. Ebenezer Bliss, mechanic; are on their way to Brainerd, where they will receive such an ultimate destination, as shall appear to be best when the Corresponding Secretary shall arrive there, on his contemplated visit to the stations situated on this side of the Mississippi.

V. *Mission among the Cherokees of the Arkansaw.*

Commenced in the year 1820. There is only the station of

*Dwight.*—On the west side of Illinois creek; four miles north of the Arkansaw river; and 500 miles from the junction of the Arkansaw with the Mississippi, following the course of the river.

Rev. Alfred Finney and Rev. Cephas Washburn, Missionaries; and Messrs. Jacob Hitchcock, and James Orr, Farmers.

Mr. Asa Hitchcock, Mechanic, is on his way to join this mission.

VI. *Mission at the Sandwich Islands.*

Established in April 1820. The principal station is Hanaroora, on the island of Woahoo. Another station is at Wymai, on the island of Atooi. The present distribution of laborers is not yet known, as intelligence has not been received of the arrival of the reinforcement, which embarked at New Haven near the close of last year.

Rev. Hiram Bingham, Rev. Asa Thurston, Rev. William Richards, Rev. Charles S. Stewart, and Rev. Artemas Bishop, missionaries;—Dr. Abraham Blatchely, physician; Messrs. Samuel Whitney, Joseph Goodrich, and James Ely, licensed preachers and assistant missionaries; Mr. Levi Chamberlain, superintendent of secular concerns; Mr. Elisha Loomis, printer; and Thomas Hopoo, John Honoree, and George Sandwich, native assistants.

VII. *Mission to Western Asia.*

Commenced in 1820. At present, part of the missionaries reside at Malta, and part at Jerusalem.

*Malta.*—Rev. Daniel Temple, Rev. William Goodell, and Rev. Isaac Bird, missionaries.

*Jerusalem.*—Rev. Pliny Fisk, and Rev. Jonas King, missionaries.

VIII. *South America.*

On the 25th of July last, Mr. John C. Bridgham and Mr. Theophilus Parvin—the former from the Theological Seminary in Andover, and the latter from the Theological Seminary in Princeton,—sailed from Boston for Buenos Ayres. Their object is, to circulate Bibles and Tracts, and to ascertain the religious and moral state of the interesting countries, in the southern and western parts of that continent.

IX. *Foreign Mission School.*

Situated in Cornwall, Con. Established in 1816.

Rev. Herman Daggett, principal, and Mr. John H. Prentice, assistant.

*Mis. Herald.*